practical and efficient fashion, and it will therefore be limited to persons of some training fitting them for such work. The number will be limited to twenty-five, and the school will not be begun if there are less than ten applicants. Persons desirous of joining the school should apply to F. W. Harris, President's Secretary, Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass.—N. S. S.

ANCIENT LAKE BASINS OF THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS.—The existence of several large fresh water lakes in the Rocky Mountain region, remarks Prof. Marsh (in the American Journal of Science and Arts, Jan., 1875), is now well established, mainly through the researches of explorers whom the striking scenery of the "Bad Lands," or the extinct animals entombed in them, have attracted thither. The oldest are of Eocene age. The one best known forms the Green River basin, and the sediments are at least 6,000 feet in thickness. The animal remains found in these strata are those of tapir-like mammals, monkeys, crocodiles, lizards and serpents, and betoken a tropical climate. The lake basin of the "Bad Lands" of Nebraska is of Miocene age, and the strata are about 300 feet thick. The assemblage of animals indicates a climate less tropical than that of the Eocene lakes, as seen in the absence of monkeys, and the scarcity of reptilian life. The Brontotheridæ, the largest known Miocene mammals, are peculiar to the lower strata of this basin. The late tertiary or Pliocene basin, Marsh calls the Niobrara basin; it extended from Nebraska nearly to the Gulf of Mexico. The strata are nearly or quite 1,500 feet thick. The fauna indicates a warm temperate climate, the more common animals being a mastodon, rhinoceroses, camels, and horses, the latter being especially abundant.

## ANTHROPOLOGY.

COPPER AS A PRESERVATIVE OF ANIMAL AND VEGETABLE SUBSTANCES.—In examining an old Indian burying ground at Harpswell, Maine, several pieces of leather and strips of nicely twisted grass fibres were found which were fastened together at the sides with a tough grass thread passing through at intervals about an inch, though some of them were woven together. With these were embedded several copper tubes, and some thin sheets of copper; the corroding of the latter so impregnated the former that they

were in a good state of preservation; the pieces exhibiting the best marked effect of the copper were the strongest. The articles of which these pieces once formed a part had long since gone to decay; not coming in contact with the copper they were not spared to become articles of curiosity or of study to the ethnologist.—E. PALMER.

## MICROSCOPY.

ROSS' NEW MICROSCOPES.—The adoption by this great house of the Jackson model of stand (which has long been very generally preferred in this country if not everywhere), in place of the transverse bar model which had come to be familiarly known as the Ross style, is an innovation of sufficient importance to attract special notice, and, we may add, congratulation. The magnificent workmanship of the old Ross stand is no secret and is a sufficient assurance of the mechanical excellence of the new ones, while the fact that they are designed by Mr. Wenham leaves nothing to be said as to their microscopical efficiency. The new stands, while adhering substantially to the Jackson model, combine some of the best features of the previous stands of Ross, Powell & Lealand, Ladd, and other makers.

The Ross' new patent object-glasses (devised by Mr. Wenham) are believed by the makers to have so well proved their superiority that they are now exclusively offered, and the old construction abandoned, from the $\frac{1}{2}$ inch upwards.

VERY THIN COVERING GLASS.—Mr. G. J. Burch, of the Queckett Club, recommends the following procedure for producing very thin covers, not for general use, but only when excessive thinness is required. Seal up the end of a $\frac{1}{4}$ inch glass tube in a blowpipe flame, and continue to heat it until so soft as to require turning to prevent its falling out of shape; then remove it from the flame and blow into it strongly until it swells, at first slowly and then suddenly, into a very thin bubble of glass, of perhaps four inches diameter. When cold it is to be broken in pieces, and the pieces cut to shape with a writing diamond. When perfect flatness is required, lay a piece on a flat strip of platinum foil and place it for a moment in a Bunsen flame, which, at a red heat, will both flatten and anneal it. A piece of this glass measured $\frac{1}{2500}$ inch $=$·0004 inch, while Dr. Pigott's measurement of the thinnest glass in his possession was ·0022, which is $5\frac{1}{2}$ times as thick.